



NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda and Mayor Ron Gonzales

San José - California



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San Jose Legislators Discuss Airport Expansion with TSA *Growth of Mineta Must Not be Slowed by TSA Shortages*

Washington, DC – Concerned that shortcomings in Transportation Security Administration staffing and facilities will inhibit expansion of Mineta San José International Airport (SJC), San José’s leading legislators – including **Reps. Mike Honda (D), Zoe Lofgren (D), and Mayor Ron Gonzales (D)** – today discussed long-term solutions to facilitate airport growth into the future.

“TSA’s must be able to accommodate San José airport’s exploding passenger demand or it could harm the economic resurgence taking place in Silicon Valley,” Rep. Honda said. “Among other concerns, I am worried about TSA’s apparent inability to staff all passenger screening lanes, particularly at a time when more and more people are using Mineta Airport.”

In conjunction with SJC Director of Aviation Ralph Tonseth, the San José delegation held a Roundtable Discussion with TSA officials to address such outstanding challenges to SJC expansion as an ongoing shortage of TSA screeners and the quality of TSA facilities and equipment at SJC.

Honda, Lofgren, and Gonzales have all expressed concerns that the ongoing shortage of TSA screeners at SJC will cause severe congestion in the terminals and potentially hamper regional economic growth. The explosive spike in recent commercial air travel in the San José threatened significant delays during the 2003 travel season, when the Bay Area congressional delegation sounded the alarm about the shortage of screeners at Mineta. This concerted pressure spurred TSA to deploy mobile screeners at SJC for the holidays, preventing lengthy passenger screening lines that would have delayed flights and inconvenienced travelers.

The legislators are also concerned about the quality of TSA facilities at SJC. Current TSA facilities at SCJ, including passenger checkpoints and baggage pods, are substandard for the airport’s anticipated growth, and funds to make improvements are uncertain. The San Jose delegation exhorted TSA to approve the city’s Letter of Intent for a key concourse project scheduled to commence in 2007.

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